



BRETHREN CHURCH, ENON, IOWA

A Synoptical of the Brethren Church of Blair County Pennsylvania:

In the year of our Lord, and on the 31st day of December, 1882 the first "Progressive" gun was fired in Blair Co., Pa. The Canyon was pulled by your humble servant. And while the shot was not heard "around the world," yet its reverberations were heard thru out "Morrison's Cove," the Gibraltar of Tunkerism in Pennsylvania. During the preceding November we went to Meyersdale, by invitation of the pastor—who is now editor of the EVANGELIST—(and I believe to this day that the pastor of that church knew it would break our ecclesiastical neck) to preach for the first "progressive" church in Pennsylvania; and here it was that we heard the first Dunkard bell ring, and being yet semi orthodox, we thought it strange. Upon our return to our regular field of labor, Grafton, Huntingdon county, we heard strange rumblings in the religious atmosphere; upon inquiry we learned that the ecclesiastical ax was being sharpened for a specific purpose and we anticipated that we might be the "specific purpose," and decapitation seemed inevitable, for the transgression of preaching at Meyersdale to those lewd fellows who went out from among us. The council met, and further deponent saith not.

The result of our preaching over in Blair county disturbed the religious equilibrium to a considerable extent, so much so, that in April 1883 we assumed the pastorate of the first organized Brethren church in Blair county, consisting of about 47 members. May 27 elder P. J. Brown came to see us and conducted our first communion service, at which time your humble servant was ordained to the eldership. Much interest was manifested in this, the first "progressive" communion, a densely crowded house, with curiosity at blood heat. What the expectations were we know not, but we know there was disappointment for some (not of us) said it was a regular "old Dunkard *lehbermohl*."

The guns of our friends: the enemy were turned upon us from every quarter; we were assailed from the pulpit in private and from the housetops, but the ghost of Barquo would not down.

Over at New Enterprise, just across the Blair county line, and ten miles south the heaven was working. The annual meeting collar was chafing the necks of brethren Jacob Furry, S. L. Buck, R. Z. Replogle, J. Z. Replogle and others, and on the 18th day of August, 1883, we preached our first sermon in

the German Baptist church, a building perhaps 100x50 feet. In the center of this immense edifice sat a little group of perhaps 50; it reminded us of a covey of quail in a twenty acre field. The empty seats received the major part of the sermon. But we kept at it, hammer and tongs, and effected an organization of some twenty members.



W. L. SPANOGLE

On the 24th day of September the Enterprise church held its first communion; here we were assisted by elders E. L. Yoder and Daniel Crofford. Soon we were kindly invited to vacate the big church—"for how can two walk together except they be agreed;" of course we "vacated," and substituted what we called the "synagogue." This was an ex-school house which stood astride the beautiful stream which flows thru the village. Here we worshipped, none daring to molest or make us afraid; the building not being so large we always had a "full house." When interviewed as to how our cause was progressing our answer always was, "a packed house," which always made a favorable impression. This continued until the 8th day of November, 1885, when a fine new church was dedicated, elder J. D. McFaden preaching the dedicatory sermon. The church pros-

pered, grew to an enrolled membership of about 150, and is now ministered to by elder J. R. Kellar. The pastors of this church beside your servant have been J. G. Snyder, elders J. F. Koontz, E. H. Smith, J. W. Smouse and present pastor.

Over in Fredericksburg, five miles east of the first organization, the leaven of the so called pharisees was at work; here on the 7th day of April, 1883 we preached our first sermon, this was included in the original organization, but subsequently organized themselves into a church with probably twenty members. In time a beautiful union church was built, which subsequently became the sole property of the brethren. Here is the church home of elder S. B. Furry, and Brother Kellar is the pastor.

The constant and persistent tooting of the "progressive" gospel trumpet by this "pestilent fellow" kept the waters disturbed. North of the original organization, six miles distant, there appeared a cloud in the sky the size of a man's hand. As we sat in our study on a beautiful May day in 1884 a messenger came and requested that we come and preach. "Where," we inquired. "In the school house," was the reply. "Got any Progressives down there?" "Well, not in fact, but some in sentiment." On Saturday evening, May 24, 1884, we discharged the first gun to a "packed house,"—of course the house was not as large as a barn. Sunday morning and evening "packed house," not a single, solitary member save the preacher. The flash of the enemys' guns were seen all around. Elders and deacons were busy taking out the progressive kinks that appeared among their members, but we kept on putting in more kinks, and on the evening of October 25, we baptized our first convert. Lamentation was heard thru-out the land over this poor, deluded soul. This was an excellent young lady and is to-day a model Christian.

On January 23, 1886, an organization was effected with 36 members, to be known as the "McKee" church. On the morning of July 11th, your servant dedicated a handsome, pleasant, little church free of debt and money left. (Will you pardon brother Editor for a little digression) Several hundred dollars were needed to liquidate the debt. We stood on the pulpit and appointed four good men and strong solicitors. The money came rolling in, we stuffed in our pants pockets a good deal of it was of the 16 to 1 kind, and you can imagine how we got loaded down. We thought of the days when annual meeting forbade the wearing of suspenders; we were glad we did not live in that day and under that law; had we so lived there would have been an exhibition there that would not have been in harmony with the occasion. No "puckering string" would have been sufficiently strong to have held up the ponderous weight.

On October 17, 1886, we held our first communion. The maximum membership enrolled in this church numbers about 140. With the exception of two years we have been its pastor. This was during our sojourn in Pittsburg, in 1892-3, when J. G. Snyder and elder J. F. Koontz filled the interim—each one year.

We will soon close our fifteenth year as pastor of this church, and sometimes we wonder how easily these good people are satisfied. A review of those fifteen years brings forcibly to our memory the flight of time and with it what changes! Some of its charter members have departed from this world, some moved to other localities. As I look over my choir who so nobly stand by me in song, I remember them when little tots led by the hand of their mothers into the church. Under my pastorate they have grown to young manhood and womanhood. Some I have baptized, married, and buried their children.

In Altoona there were a few isolated members who arranged a hall for services, obtaining ministers whenever and wherever they could so do. Elders Wampler, Mackey, Replogle, Koontz and Smith ministered at intervals. On January 28, 1894, we met with them in service, found a baker's dozen of big hearted brethren and noble sisters who were desirous for church organization, but hall expenses were too heavy. Obtaining a comfortable school house we held forth the word. On April 16, 1894,